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These quotations are sufficient to show the character of the book. If it was written, as is hinted already, with the design of conveying a useful lesson, it answers this purpose completely. No declamation against tyranny could excite greater horror and disgust than the perusal of this volume. Considered in this view, it would be well worth recommending it to the perusal of young persons, at a time when tyranny is making such dreadful strides to universal dominion, and when the spirit of liberty, the only power capable of arresting its progress seems to be sedulously repressed and stifled, by those who affect to be its defenders. The language is pure; the stile exhibits to a great degree that pithy terseness which is the peculiar beauty of Attic composition.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The Bard of Erin, and other Poems, mostly National. By James M'Henry. Smyth & Lyons, duodecimo, p.p. 80; price 3s. 4d.

THE Bard of Erin, and several other small Poems, by Mr. M'Henry, have recently been published in Belfast. To dwell with severity on productions, composed under disadvantages of a peculiar nature, as the Author states, and by a young man, would be an invidious task, and very distressing to the writer of this review. Yet however an allowable partiality to an Irishman's compositions may lead us to praise, truth and taste require also to condemn: and where faults are manifest it is necessary to point them out. The author who shows a good deal of poetic genius, may find benefit, the public something to guide, in a review of these poems. The Bard of Erin consisting of 154 lines, is not distinguished by much originality of thought, or strength of idea; the lines flow easily, but there are words in it, and expressions, not quite warranted by the usages of the English language, or at least they are inelegant.

"Rocks and Woods their glimmering shades *bestowed*,
overcome with care,
Oft Erin's genius feels thy influence *dear*,"

are expressions we do not read with pleasure. The passage however, beginning, "ye guardian spirits of my country say," is good and spirited; the term, *barbarity*, is nevertheless extremely obscure, as it is very doubtful, to know the period, or the manner of Ireland's becoming barbarous according to the author's description. The same remark applies to "hostile ignorance."

We have the lines further on;

"Nor feared in numbers all his soul to give,
Sure from his sacred function *then to live.*

This is not elevating the character of the bard; we would much rather have seen the second line run thus;

"And taught his country's acts in verse to live.

Taste hanging on the strings like dew on the plain, is not a happy image. (line 45)

The line

"Neglect, *which breaks your heart and mine,*"

is not poetical, and the whole part from line 20 to 50, though far from wanting merit, disappoints from an indefiniteness of term and meaning, and we can only gather, that Ireland was once covered with glory, and that barbarity and ignorance have injured her.

The poet then complains of the disadvantages of his situation, and informs us that love, and a wish for fame, first prompted his verse, and compares himself, we do not see with what justice, to Caithalore, an Irish Chieftain, who fell in battle.

The passage beginning at line 85, has some parts extremely good, and the sentiment and feeling displayed are highly deserving approbation.

"Howe'er I stand, my fortune's bolts severe,
Still my degraded country draws the tear:
How long Ierne's genius wilt thou mourn,
The wreaths of all thy ancient glories torn!

How long shall Poetry, celestial maid,
Tune thy pathetic harp in sorrow's shade!
How long the ardour of thy children lie,
Doom'd to the caves of cold obscurity;
Rouse, rouse, to all thy former self return,
Instruct thy sons with native warmth to burn;
Make in their breasts their father's virtues glow,
Their guardian Angels shall their aid bestow;
Light, life and glory spread their genial sky,
And prejudice the hallow'd region fly;"

After the song of the bard we are told, "the trees, the rocks, and mountain cliffs appeared to move." "The moon-light vale was overcast with mist." "A virgin harper," who proves to be the Genius of Ireland, is seen.

"With gold and purple were her temples crowned,
Beset with stars and flaming rubies round,
Of heavenly mould the harp on which she played,
In holy wreaths of shamrock green arrayed."

The genius of Erin is not much indebted to the Author for the dress he gives her, and the ornaments of her head are very little accordant with the wreaths, which deck the harp.

The genius informs the bard in a very flattering manner how he is to be rewarded,

"Long have I proudly marked the generous pain,
Which heaven approves, nor will approve in vain,
But round thy brows shall glory's palm entwine,
For ever due to patriot worth like thine,
For know, thy sweet enthusiastic lays,
Shall reap thy dearest meed, ETERNAL PRAISE."

This is certainly not undervaluing himself, and we think is rather hastily bestowing "glory's palm" on what is here called patriot worth.

A prophecy is then made,

"An age of joy to Erin will appear,
A glorious age, *and 'tis already near.*"

Here the genius forgets Erin a little to compliment Britannia, and tells the bards to pour their "noblest rage," on the occasion of her lending her succour to the former. A high and deserved compliment is paid to Belfast. The conclusion is extremely obscure, and we lament very much, that we are compelled to repeat this kind of remark, as the author's intentions appear good, and time, study, and the criticism of an enlightened friend, would have prevented our disagreeable task of reprehension. We observe the word *Liberty*, is not once mentioned in this poem, or indeed we believe in the whole book!

The recurrence to the ancient times of Ireland, brings a thousand heart-rending recollections, and we think the Bard of Erin ought, if he spoke at all on the subject, to have spoken more boldly and explicitly. The want of true knowledge of the state of Ireland, of studying the disposition of it's inhabitants, and of conciliation in the treatment of them have caused this country much misery. The hand should not tremble in touching the strings of Erin's harp, and the Bard should remember in recording other times, that its tones are sometimes martial, as well as plaintive, or *pathetic*.

In the notes, Mr. Arthur O'Neil is described as the *only Harper in Ireland*. Patrick Quin, of Portadown, has perhaps superior merit to O'Neil. There is a harper in Drogheda. Another, a female in Dublin, and doubtless several in the South, and West. The author has been therefore rather hasty in pointing out Mr. O'Neil, as the sole performer on that charming and venerable instrument, the Irish harp. The poem of Caithalore, taken from Irish history, shews great ease in forming sonorous lines, and is very respectable on account of the source from whence it is taken.

In the 23rd. line, we presume its an error in the press, when we see

"Stout *were* his heart, that met thee on the field,"

The comparison,

"As sinners sink in heaven's avenging hour,"

is in itself puerile; applied to a tyrant and warrior, it seems ludicrous.

The last lines of Caithalore's speech, with the exception of the word *bore*, have considerable merit.

"Death's direst form my bosom can defy,
And in the cause of virtue, pants to die.
My daughter, now from ruin, guilt, & thee,
By heaven's protecting arm, and mine set free,
Shall bless with tears, the death her father *bore*,
And Bards shall spread the fame of Caithalore."

The tale of Edward and Eliza shews great goodness of heart, tho' it has not much interest. It is liable to the faults we have adverted to as to language.

"I could not help *to love him dear,*"

is one instance among others. The whole resembles Goldsmith's Edwin and Angelina.

Corun and Lora, has some very pretty stanzas, and the story of it is similar to that of "*La folle par amour*" a beautiful little French dramatic piece. It is on that subject which is always affecting and melancholy; where the understanding is lost, from the effects of disappointed love, who can refuse sympathy, that has known what it is to feel? but if it is a young and beautiful girl, who is represented labouring under such insanity, what heart can avoid the throb of anguish at her situation; what eye can retain the tear of joy at her recovery?

The following lines we would wish to have been corrected before going to the press:

"When our souls to each other we swore,
Is a sovereign *remead* for the mind."

On the whole, tho' the Author has not, at the critical moment of restoration to understanding, in our opinion, made the passage as affecting as he might have done, yet his tale is pretty, and the selection of the subject shews sensibility, and discernment.

The elegy written on the Inver, near Larne Church-yard, is an imitation, and not a happy one, of Gray's unrivalled elegy.

The songs on the seasons, particularly Spring, are pleasing, and manifest observation of nature, the true volume for the poet's study. The song called the Exile's return is in some parts very poetical.

The use of the words *pathos* and *pathetic* thro' the poems is not agreeable at least to our ear, and we think *passion* or *plaintive* would have answered generally better. *Nationality* is a word also, which we object to as a vague term. We conclude this critique by assuring the author, that we sincerely wish for his welfare, & that we reckon on his future improvement. He has dared to meet the public eye: there was courage in the attempt. As an Irishman publishing in his own province, he deserves consideration for his youth and retired situation, and encouragement for the proofs of genius he has given. But it is due to our country and ourselves, to shew that we can praise without blindness, and discern faults, which might otherwise be supposed to receive general approbation or acquiescence. The true object for the poet or the critic, is to instruct, amuse or delight: utility is never to be lost sight of.

The improvement of the taste and mind is naturally advanced by good poetry; the former may be spoiled or blunted by the perusal of the inferior and vulgar kind, the latter receives no addition to its stores by it. Poetry is therefore a public property, which ought not to pass unobserved.

We rejoice to see the efforts of our country-man; and we look to future similar attempts with pleasure.

Poetry exalts the mind, it carries it back to remote times, makes it disdain mercenary ideas, and leads to the expression of pure morality, and exalted and vigorous patriotism. We shall take our leave of our author by referring him to the beautiful part of the Eneid, where the poet sings to his harp the most sublime subjects. We recommend to him the example, and we trust he may merit and obtain similar applause.

.....Citharâ crinitus Iopas,
Personat auratâ, docuit quæ maximus Atlas.
Hic canit errantem Lunam, Solisque labores,
Unde hominum genus, et pecudes: unde imber, et ignes:
Arcturum, pluviasque Hyadas, geminosque Triones:
Quid tantum Oceano properant se tingere soles
Hyberni, vel quæ tardis mora noctibus obstet.
Ingeminant plausum Tyrii, Troësque sequuntur.

Le Comte de Corke Surnommé le Grand, ou Seduction sans Artifice; suivi de cinq Nouvelles. Par Madame de Genlis; 12mo. 2vols. p. p. 468. Colburn, London, 1808.

(Concluded from P. 59, No. VI.)

DURING his residence with Sir C. Manwood, Richard finds some opportunities of doing good offices to Lady Ranelagh and her friend; but